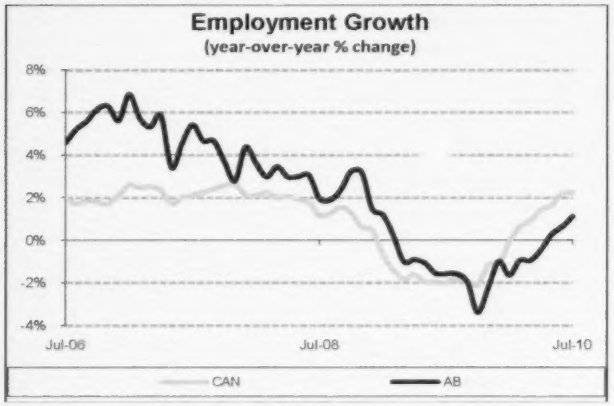
Labour Market

Fourth consecutive month of employment growth…

Employment in Alberta increased for the fourth consecutive month in July, as the province gained 8,800 jobs. However, as was the case in June, the overall increase in employment was due entirely to growth in part-time positions (21,700), which offset a decline in full-time positions (-13,000). The overall increase in employment and a slight decline in the participation rate reduced the unemployment rate by 0.4 percentage points to 6.3% in July, the lowest level it has reached since April 2009.

Nationally, employment decreased by 9,300 in July, which was the first overall decline in seven months. Large declines in full-time employment were mostly offset by a gain in part-time jobs. The unemployment rate edged up slightly, to 8.0% in July.



Ivey PMI

Index continues to decline…

The Ivey Purchasing Managers Index was 54 in July, down from the 58.9 recorded in June. After peaking at a value of 62.7 in May, the Ivey PMI has now declined for two consecutive months. However, a value above 50 on the index, which measures Canadian purchasing manager's buying activity, implies an expansion.

US Employment

Government sector drags down numbers…

US payroll employment declined by 131,000 in July, the second consecutive month of losses after June's figures were negatively revised to 221,000 job losses. The overall decline was largely the result of job losses in the government sector (-202,000) with the laying off of temporary census workers accounting for 143,000 of the job losses. Employment excluding the census increased by 12,000 in July. The US unemployment rate was 9.5% in July, unchanged from the previous month despite job losses due to a decline in the participation rate.

Canadian Dollar (US¢/C$)	
August 6, 2010	97.34
July 30, 2010	97.18
2010-11 YTD	97.04
WTI Oil US$/bbl	
August 5, 2010	$82.01
July 29, 2010	$ 78.36
2010-11 YTD	$ 77.84
Nymex Natural Gas C$/MMBtu*	
Near-month Contract	
August 6, 2010	$4.68
July 30, 2010	$ 5.03

*Estimate based on Nymex Futures Market Price

Building Permits

Value of permits rebound to pre-boom levels…

The value of building permits issued in Alberta increased by 17.7 % (seasonally adjusted) between May and June to just under $1.2 billion. The increase was entirely due to the increase in the value of permits in the non-residential sector (67.9%), which was more than enough to offset a decline in the value of residential permits (-8.5%). Compared to a year earlier, the value of building permits was 31.4% higher in June.

Nationally, the value of building permits was up 6.5% from May to nearly $6.6 billion (seasonally adjusted).

Commodities

Weather problems propelling wheat prices higher…

Global wheat prices have surged over the last week as concerns over the availability of supply during the 2010-11 marketing season have grown. Flooding in western Canada combined with drought in Russia are expected to sharply reduce global wheat output this year. These weather problems and an export ban announced by Russia this week have driven wheat prices up more than 60% since the start of June. However, in a report this week the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization noted that strong inventories of wheat exist after bumper crops the last two years making runaway food inflation unlikely, at least in the near term.

Current Economic Indicators

	2008	2009	2010YTD*	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July
Population									
Population[1] (000's) (level)	3,596	3,688	3,707	--	--	3,725	--	--	--
% change	2.4	2.6	2.1	--	--	1.6	--	--	--
Net Interprovincial Migraton[1] (level)	15,317	23,006	-6,832	--	--	312	--	--	--
Net International Migration[1] (level)	20,039	20,074	1,477	--	--	6,758	--	--	--
Net Non-permanent Residents[1] (level)	18,536	19,058	-4,332	--	--	48	--	--	--
Labour Market									
Employment (000's) NEW!	2,013	1,988	1,987	1,973	1,969	1,979	1,994	2,000	2,009
% change NEW!	2.8	-1.3	-0.3	-1.0	-1.0	-0.4	0.3	0.6	1.1
Unemployment Rate (%) NEW!	3.6	6.6	6.9	6.9	7.5	7.4	6.6	6.7	6.3
Participation Rate (%) NEW!	74.7	74.3	73.2	73.0	73.2	73.4	73.2	73.3	73.1
Average Weekly Earnings ($)	923.21	950.13	984.20	985.99	993.04	993.17	985.17	--	--
% change	6.0	2.9	3.4	2.1	3.0	6.1	4.4	--	--
Price Indices									
Consumer Price Index	3.1	-0.1	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.6	1.1	0.6	--
Excluding food and energy	2.1	1.4	1.0	1.3	0.8	1.4	0.9	0.7	--
Non-Res. Const. Cost Index[2] (quarterly)	13.2	-9.8	-5.0	--	-5.0	--	--	--	--
Farm Product Price Index	11.5	-11.3*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Crops	26.7	-22.9*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Livestock	2.1	-0.8*	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Household Sector									
Housing Starts (SAAR, 000's)	29.2	20.0	29.5	28.2	33.9	35.6	28.8	26.4	--
% change	-39.6	-31.6	101.9	139.0	164.8	176.0	101.4	30.0	--
New Housing Price Index	0.7	-9.0	-0.6	-1.4	-0.2	1.0	1.6	--	--
Edmonton	1.0	-11.2	-2.7	-3.3	-2.4	-1.0	-0.1	--	--
Calgary	0.6	-6.7	1.6	0.4	2.0	2.9	3.1	--	--
MLS Average Resale Prices ($ 000's)	351.4	340.5	351.6	348.2	357.9	359.9	355.5	343.6	--
% change	-1.5	-3.1	6.8	5.1	10.3	7.7	7.1	4.0	--
Edmonton	330.8	319.1	323.5	327.6	341.4	332.1	317.9	299.2	--
% change	-2.0	-3.5	4.6	2.6	11.0	8.7	4.4	2.1	--
Calgary	401.1	384.3	399.3	395.1	398.2	401.3	411.5	403.7	--
% change	-2.9	-4.2	6.9	5.2	9.0	6.4	9.2	5.8	--
Retail Sales[3]	0.2	-8.3	5.2	6.6	11.2	5.3	2.4	--	--
New Motor Vehicle Sales	-7.3	-21.7	8.6	24.0	15.3	6.9	4.7	--	--
Consumer Bankruptcies	6,066	9,986	2841	637	776	744	--	--	--
% change	27.2	64.6	-11.0	-9.8	-18.4	-11.2	--	--	--
Business Sector									
Rigs Drilling	236	128	183	339	219	62	56	118	199
% change	-2.1	-45.6	55.2	42.3	103.5	51.9	76.4	99.0	135.5
Goods Exports (customs based)	34.6	-37.3	21.8	19.6	18.5	27.8	50.1	--	--
Energy	42.5	-41.4	37.7	36.7	32.8	48.8	82.9	--	--
Agriculture	32.0	-10.2	-17.5	-20.1	-9.6	-27.6	-5.0	--	--
Total Farm Cash Receipts (quarterly)	17.2	-8.1	-17.3	--	-17.3	--	--	--	--
Manufacturing Shipments	7.0	-21.6	8.7	4.3	9.9	12.9	12.7	--	--
Wholesale Trade[4]	9.5	-15.9	1.2	-2.1	6.3	5.5	7.7	--	--
Building Permits NEW!	-16.5	-14.2	25.0	69.1	41.4	28.1	-11.8	31.4	--
Residential	-31.5	-11.8	88.6	172.1	91.3	64.6	90.9	50.6	--
Non-residential	3.7	-16.3	-16.4	4.3	2.0	0.0	-57.7	14.4	--
Business Bankruptcies	447	405	142	30	48	37	--	--	--
% change	-0.4	-9.4	2.9	-31.8	54.8	54.2	--	--	--

Government of Alberta ■
Finance and Enterprise

Alberta ■

* YTD – year-to-date represents the change since the beginning of the year compared to the same period in the previous year.

[1] Quarterly; annual numbers are presented on a census year basis (July 1 - June 30).

[2] Average of Calgary and Edmonton

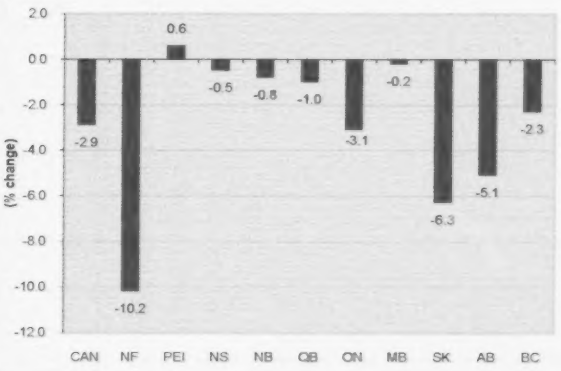
[3] The Retail Sales series was revised on April 23, 2010 and is no longer comparable with numbers in previous Bulletins.

[4] The Wholesale Trade series was revised on April 21, 2010 and is no longer comparable with numbers in previous Bulletins.

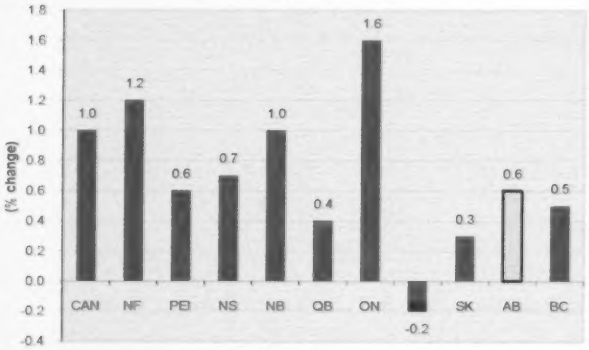
Sources: All data is from Statistics Canada except Housing Starts (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation), MLS Average Resale Prices (Canadian Real Estate Association), Rigs Drilling (Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors) and Bankruptcies (Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy Canada).

Current Economic Indicators by Province

Real GDP Growth
(2009 year-over-year growth, preliminary estimate)

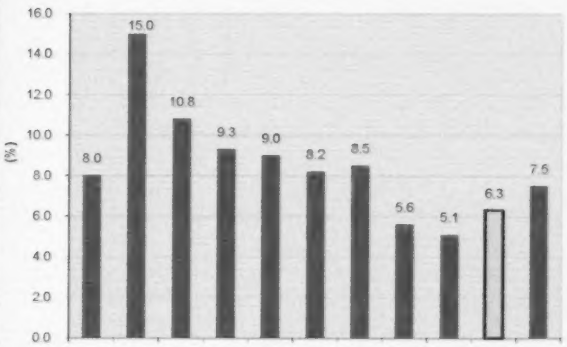


CPI Inflation
(June year-over-year % change)



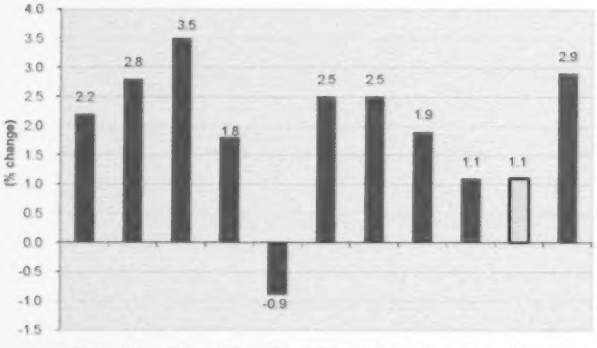
NEW!

Unemployment Rate
(July 2010, Seasonally Adjusted)

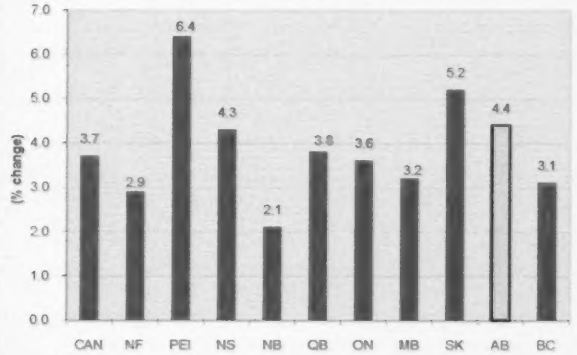


NEW!

Employment
(July year-over-year growth)



Average Weekly Earnings
(May year-over-year growth)



Housing Starts
(SAAR June 2010)